

*Ormond to Waiapu.*—The southern part of this road has been under the supervision of Mr. Krippner, who has made nineteen and a half miles of 8 feet and 12 feet wide, with a number of bridge culverts. The northern end, starting from Te Awani Village southwards, has been in charge of Mr. Haig, who has completed five miles of 9 feet and 12 feet road. The difficulty of dealing with the Native opposition to this road has been very great, entailing great loss of time and money. On my visit there in March last I found everything at a standstill, but works have since been progressing. There is a very long piece to make before the two ends of this road are joined, and part of it is very difficult; but should no further Native troubles arise, next year should see at least half this distance disposed of. When completed a great boon will have been conferred on the Waiapu settlers, as it will allow them to use a well-graded road instead of the present abominable coast track.

*Waipiro Branch* of the above road was made specially to give access to the Waiapu Valley from the Waipiro landing. It is eight and a half miles long, 12 feet wide, and is complete all but some culverts. Some of the settlers in the district gave monetary assistance to make both this and the next branch road.

*Tuparoa Branch of Waiapu Road.*—Mr. Haig has finished two and a half miles of this road, 12 feet wide, except that some of the culverts are not in. Native difficulties have prevented its completion, which will be very easy when work can be continued.

*Gisborne to Waimata.*—Works on this road have been repairs, removing slips, and building culverts. The heavy floods of a few months ago carried away most of the timber for the small bridges. It would be advisable to continue this road a few miles further, as it runs through Government land of first-rate quality.

*Gisborne to Wairoa.*—About twenty-eight miles of this road have been completed during the two past seasons, *i.e.*, the works have been spread over that distance, parts of the road having been previously formed as a bridle-road. One contract for culverts is still in hand, and cannot be completed until timber can be taken over the road. The County Engineer has had charge of the works, subject to Mr. Barnard's advice, who reports that the road is in fair condition. To effect a junction with Mr. Baker's work at Te Reinga a distance of seven miles remains to be converted from a bridle- to a cart-road, at an estimated cost of £1,120.

*Taupo viâ Rotoaira to West Coast.*—This line, which is part of an important main road of the future, was commenced in February last by Mr. A. B. Wright. It starts from about a mile on the Napier side of Taupo, and follows generally the shores of Lake Taupo till near its southern end. The works of formation are generally remarkably easy, except in two places, where the solid rock is being blasted out, and also excepting the bridges, some of which will be very large works. The Maoris have completed to date about two miles out of the fourteen already graded, and a contract for building a bridge of three 30-foot spans over Waitakanui has been let. The Natives are doing the work by the piece, most of the fourteen miles being let, but as this is the winter season very little progress is being made. The blasting is in the hands of four of the Constabulary, detailed to that work by Major Scannell. It is to be feared the work will take a long time to finish, as it is deemed expedient to leave it in the hands of the Natives, who are constantly away on one pretext or another. This road when opened will join Field's track to Wanganui, and will pass close to Lake Taupo, the Tokanui, Hot Springs, Tongariro, and Ruapehu Mountains, thus opening to easy access another district famed for its natural wonders.

*Ruakituri Block.*—The works in this district are under the charge of Mr. Lambert, of the Survey Department, under the supervision of the Chief Surveyor, Napier. Mr. Lambert has furnished a very complete report, from which the following information is compiled:—

*Marumaru to Te Tuhi Branch.*—Seven and three-quarter miles have been completed as a 5-foot-in-the-solid bridle-road, which is immediately to be continued on from Te Tuhi for three miles to the Ruakituri River. The grades are all good, but the crossing at the Wairoa River will often be an obstacle to traffic until a ferry is established. The works cost about £55 per mile.

*Ohuka-Pukemaru Branch.*—Total length, 13.25 miles, of which 9.75 miles have been made during the season, 5 feet wide. This line starts from the main road, Wairoa to Waikaremoana, and runs through the Taramarama and Ruakituri Blocks. The works were performed by Native contractors, at the very small price of £24 10s. per mile.

*Ruakituri Valley Road.*—This line starts from the Gisborne-Wairoa Road at Te Reinga, the crossing to Hangaroa River being effected by a canoe-ferry; 9.75 miles were completed during the season. It will junction with the line from Te Tuhi when made.

*Te Tuhi-Pukemaru Road.*—This line, of 6.75 miles in length, is formed as a stock-driving road, to effect a junction with two of the other lines already made. It does not follow the permanent grades, but will be very useful as affording access to the country about to be offered for sale. This series of roads, laid out to and through the block called Ruakituri, will render access to most of the sections comparatively easy, and should have the effect of hastening settlement in no small degree. All the works have been completed at a very small cost per mile, thanks to the arrangements made by Mr. Lambert.

*Wairoa-Gisborne.*—This road, which is a continuation of the Gisborne-Wairoa Road, through the Wairoa County, has also been under construction during the season by Mr. Lambert, directed by Mr. Baker, two and three-quarter miles having been completed; whilst other portions, including several bridges, are in hand. Its completion, from Opoiti to Te Reinga, will render the whole road from Gisborne to Wairoa tolerably easy for traffic.

Attached hereto I beg to furnish a schedule of road-works performed by the department in opening up Crown lands prior to sale. From it you will gather that 136.65 miles have been completed during the season, whilst forty-five miles have been graded in addition, preparatory to commencing the work of construction.